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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the ways in which a small number of school principals in England and Wales are making changes in their management structures and processes to cope with an increasingly turbulent environment. Using evidence on a comparative basis from organizations outside education, this paper looks at the way in which a number of principals are adopting radically new approaches to leadership and to organizational design. Evidence is presented from detailed case studies undertaken in six secondary schools that are known to have made significant changes in their management structures and systems. The first section concerns the changing leadership context. The second section, on the "new organizations" outside education, details the key characteristics of leadership, empowerment and teams, customer orientation and quality, integrity, and response to change--topics explored in the context of secondary schools. Six schools are used to illustrate the abandonment of heroic leadership, an emerging trend of empowerment and teams, a concern with customers and quality, strong instructional leadership, fair and caring leaders, and empowerment for change. (Contains 28 references.) (RR)

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School Principals - Entrepreneurial Professionals

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SCHOOL PRINCIPALS - ENTREPRENEURIAL PROFESSIONALS

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Introduction

This paper examines the ways in which a small number of School Principals in England and Wales are making changes to their management structures and processes to cope with an increasingly turbulent environment. Using evidence on a comparative basis from organizations outside education the paper looks at the way in which a number of Principals are adopting radically new approaches to leadership and to organizational design. Evidence is presented from detailed case studies undertaken in six secondary schools which are known to have made significant changes in their management structures and systems. The six schools are situated in England and Wales and cover a range of geographical and social contexts. All the schools have a roll of between 800-1200 pupils and have between 40-60 teaching staff. Evidence was gathered by interviewing key members of staff at both senior and middle management levels.

The Changing Leadership Context

Organizations in every sphere of commercial or service activity are subject to powerful and rapidly changing environmental pressures. Outside pressures on organizations include increased competition not only on a domestic scale but on a global scale, while another powerful influence is the IT explosion and the utilisation of increasingly sophisticated and extremely expensive technology in a range of industries. Indeed the rapid changes in the environment of organizations has led to the time we live in being called 'the age of unreason' (Handy 1989) or the 'world turned upside down' (Peters 1988). Peters goes further and suggests that 'managers must thrive on chaos'. Leaders in all sectors, however, have realised that survival in this context depends on winning and retaining customers and that they must turn out, without fail, products of high quality which will please the customer.

The environmental pressures are equally great on schools in England and Wales. There have been major changes in the political and social context in which schools are operating and they are having to respond to new and challenging demands. A radical transformation has occurred in the purpose of schools. Blamed for mediocre performance and the failure to meet the needs of the economy, schools have been pushed into being vehicles of economic utility with goals such as social values becoming less important than making the purpose of school integral to the needs of business and industry. However, the most powerful ideology imposed on schools has been the belief in consumer control as the key to improved performance and the way forward to increased accountability. This is exemplified in the introduction into schools of the free market conditions of choice and competition. Schools will compete with one another to attract pupils and be under direct consumer control. This is a belief that a 'system which is accountable and responsive to the choices of individual customers of the service will improve in quality as a necessary consequence' (Ransom 1988). Quality will be guaranteed by placing the consumer and choice at the heart of the education system and the survival of schools will depend on their capacity to stick by their customers. Individuals should be free to place their custom where they wish and schools which do not attract custom will not survive.

Another powerful driving force for change has been the belief of a number of governments (eg in the UK and the USA) that schools have failed within their existing

administrative framework to provide education of the necessary relevance and quality, or indeed been sufficiently accountable for their performance. The traditional management arrangement of professional dominance in the schools, and local political control at Local Education Authority or District level has been unsatisfactory in terms of the educational performance of schools. Schools have been hi-jacked, in this view, by a combination of professionals and politicians and taken away from the real source of control, namely the consumer. The 'stifling control of professional bureaucracies' (Ransom 1988) has resulted in low standards (hence the attacks on child-centred learning), irrelevant curriculum (not enough attention paid to core subjects and to key skills), and inadequate assessment of teacher performance (too much control by the professionals).

To accommodate these powerful beliefs about the inadequacies of schools, a number of developments are taking place which are, at the same time, complex and contradictory. On the one hand the Education Reform Act (1988) in England and Wales promotes decentralisation with greater accountability and responsibility placed at the school level with increased control and authority for school Heads and governing bodies. Local Management of Schools with devolved financial power to schools, the possibility of opting out, choice of schools for parents, all place schools within the framework of a locally-determined system with accountability at the level of the school. The school in turn has opportunities to be creative, innovative and market based.

However, a significant contradictory trend is the increase in central government control with key developments such as the introduction of a National Curriculum and national testing in attempts to create national standards for education. Added to this there have been government initiatives on performance evaluation and teacher appraisal and on the creation of choice through the setting up of Grant Maintained Schools and City Technology Colleges. The pattern of administrative functioning embodies at the same time an administrative centralism and delegation to local levels. This is becoming an increasingly common framework in a number of countries.

The New Organizations

How have leaders outside education responded to the 'world turned upside down'? Kanter (1989), Peters (1988), Grinyer et al (1988) and many other commentators have given 'real life' examples of how the design of organizations and leadership behaviour have both undergone major changes in efforts to survive the continuous pressure of unpredictable and highly competitive environments. These new types of organizations have been called 'post entrepreneurial' because they bring entrepreneurial principles to the established corporation' (Kanter 1989 p353) or 'post bureaucratic' or 'beyond hierarchy' (Peters 1988). What sort of organization fits these descriptions? One of the major problems in creating structural change is the mental image we have of the organization as pyramid. Semtler (1989) describes a remarkable attempt in a machine manufacturing company in Brazil to manage without managers by democratic employee involvement. He argues that 'the organizational pyramid is the cause of much corporate evil', because ... 'pyramids emphasise power, promote insecurity, distort communications, hobble interaction'. To defeat the pyramid, a pattern of an organizational circle was introduced, with management levels reduced to three. The circle in reality consists of three concentric circles - the inner circle of five senior managers are called counsellors, Heads of divisions are called partners and task leaders are called coordinators.

Handy (1989) suggests a way forward to new forms of organization using new metaphors or symbols. He describes the Shamrock Organization, the Triple 1 Organization and the Federal Organization. The Federal model may have particular appeal to schools. According to Handy, 'Federalism implies a variety of individual groups, allied together under a common flag with some shared identity' (p93). Handy insists that federalism is much more than decentralisation. Decentralisation implies that the centre is giving power to the outlying units, but federalism means that 'the centre's powers are given to it by outlying groups in a sort of reverse delegation' (p94). The task of the centre in this type of organization is to advise and influence rather than direct or control. Federal organizations can therefore be seen as a 'reverse thrust organization where ... initiative, drive and energy comes mostly from the bits' (p94).

The differences between the traditional bureaucratic and post-bureaucratic organization can be summarised in Table 1 below (quoted from Jenkins 1991 p156/7).

Table 1

Bureaucracy	Post-bureaucratic organization
position centred	person contact
repetition orientated	creation-orientated
rules orientated	results orientated
pay for status	pay for contribution
restricted information flows	all possible means of communication used
specific mandates and territories	cross-territory relationships
ownership and control	access, involvement and experimentation
	(adapted from Kanter 1989 p353-4)

More specifically in this type of organization:

- Bureaucratic processes are disappearing.
- Reducation in levels of hierarchy are apparent.
- The differentiation between managers and workers is diminishing.
- Cross-departmental collaboration is essential.
- Segmentalism has broken down.
- Staff are working in functional or cross-organizational teams.
- Power has been handed down - individual staff and teams are empowered to act.
- Open networks of information and negotiation replace hierarchical top-down control of information.
- Boundaries are breaking down within the organization and its customers and stakeholders.
- The organization is built around the contribution of skills of people, not on fixed roles.

Key characteristics of the new organizations

Let us explore some of the characteristics of the new organizations.

1. Leadership

Perhaps the most telling characteristics of the new organizations is that leaders have a radically different view of their role. They are now behaving much more in line with the concept of the transformational leader (Burns 1978) or the post-heroic leader (Bradford and Cohen 1984). Burns has drawn a distinction between transactional and transformational leadership.

While transactional leadership is about necessary activities of problem resolution, transforming leaders are engaged in an enterprise to raise ethical aspirations of both the leader and the led. Transformational leadership addresses the basic purpose of the organization by giving other people in the organization a vision that transforms the existing situation, and which is concerned with reaching the soul of others in a fashion which raises 'followers to higher degrees of consciousness such as liberty, freedom, justice and self-actualization' (Bennis & Nanus 1985 p218). In this sense, too, leaders are primarily culture builders, creating the shared valued and beliefs which develop the organizational framework within which structures are built and people behave (Duignan 1988).

The concept of leader as hero has been a dominant model. The heroic leader is the one who knows, sees, and controls everything, who has more knowledge and expertise than any subordinate, able to solve any problem and being primarily responsible for how things work (Bradford and Cohen 1984). The outcomes of this sort of behaviour do not match expectations. This type of heroic leadership leads to communication blockages, slow responsiveness to change, hierarchical decision making, rigid procedures and poor quality decisions. It undervalues and underestimates the abilities and problem-solving capacity of subordinates.

To achieve excellence we need post heroic leaders who have in mind the development and inspiration of subordinates, and who will go beyond participation in sharing problems and power with teams (called shared-responsibility teams). These leaders are powerful but not over-dominating, centrally involved but not central to every activity. Contemporary organisations have to be run by gaining the commitment and consent of the staff. Handy (1989 p132) comments that it is not 'virtuous' to do this; it is essential. He adds that the new type of organization emerging to cope with new tasks does not work if everything is left to one person. 'Everyone has to be capable or nothing happens'.

These views of leadership are more in tune with the leader as reflective practitioner - philosophers in action who have to ask and seek answers to questions about themselves and their activities (Hodgkinson 1983). By continuously reflecting on practice eaders can understand and articulate their own beliefs and values and 'build their theories-in-action to guide their new practice' (Duignan 1988). In a dialectical view of leadership, too, the leader cannot be seen as all controlling and all dominating but is a facilitator helping to create a 'flowing dialect of transformative action' when 'leaders become followers and followers become leaders in the ebb and flow of organizational interaction'. (Watkins 1989p2)

In brief leadership involves power sharing, transformative action and making of moral decisions (Foster 1986). It is non-hierarchical or status driven, it is concerned with social influence towards ethical purposes - it is visionary and transformational.

2. Empowerment and Teams

A second and critical characteristic of the new organization is the way in which staff are empowered. Power is devolved and in many cases to self-managing teams. Tiers of management have been reduced, bureaucratic rules and systems abandoned and entrepreneurialism fostered.

'The use of self-managing teams (SMTs) in work settings not only has gained momentum but appears to be at a record high. These teams appear in many forms such as quality circles, task forces, communication teams, now venture teams, and business brand teams. They are widely used among such companies as Digital, F.M.C., Frito-lay, GE, General Foods, GM, Hewlett-Packard, Honeywell and Pepsi Cola as well as among many smaller firms' (Barry 1991).

The SMTs or 'bossless teams' as they are also known are seen as the key to 'solving complex problems, increasing productivity and heightening creativity' (Barry 1991). The use of SMTs has entailed a reduction in middle management and a more rapid response to product innovation and customer care. This distributed leadership model, of course, brings its own problems and requires the development of new leadership roles throughout the organization (Jenkins 1991, Barry 1991) and we are reminded that teams need to become the key learning unit in organizations ... 'because all important decisions are now made in teams, either directly or through the need for teams to translate individual decisions into action' (Senge 1990).

3. Customer Orientation and Quality

A third major characteristic of leaders in these transformed organizations is their orientation to the customer. These organizations are driven by customer needs and are 'obsessed with delighting the customer' and they are judged by their rapidity of response and quality of service to the customer. An interesting feature of customer directed organizations, apart from their detailed and careful customer care strategy and practices, is the way that they have created coalitions between the various stakeholders in the organization. These coalitions have been called by Kanter (1989) - PALS. PALS means that organizations 'pool resources with others, ally to exploit an opportunity or link systems in a partnership' (1989 p118). This means the creation of coalitions between stakeholders, and a major partnership can be forged between the organization and its customers. Peters (1988) talks about bold new partnerships with customers and, to achieve this new partnership, for organizations to forego tight boundary control. To achieve partnership, limited concepts such as boundary spanning, buffering the environment and coping strategies must be replaced by ideas of networks, stakeholders' alliances, and creative partnerships.

Since quality is defined as the quality of production as **perceived** by the customer, these new types of organizations are equally obsessed with quality. Organizations outside education are generally adopting TQM (Total Quality Management). TQM both creates 'a culture and environment supportive to the continuous improvement of quality' but within the culture 'quality is an achievable, measurable and profitable entity' (Collard, 1989 p3). Therefore within the wider strategies employed by managers to achieve commitment to quality, quality control audits and statistical forms of measurement are

used. However, it should be noted that these companies have avoided a form of Neo-Taylorism concerned narrowly with measurement and control but it is understood that TQM is to do with people and changing values, beliefs and ways of doing things rather than economic considerations.

4. Integrity

In these organizations, leaders have also moved to reduce the effects of damaging micro-political behaviour and instead to stress integrity (Goldsmith & Clutterbuck 1984, Cox and Cooper 1988). 'A shared vision, openness and integrity are the keys to transcending political manoeuvrings and are the antidotes to internal politics and game playing' (Senge 1990). When people arrive at a shared vision, 'the foundation of the political environment begins to crumble - the belief that all we care about is self interest' (Senge, 1990). In a study of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) 5 **effective** CEOs were mentioned as having integrity, being trusted, being honest and credible, being willing to take responsibility for self and admit mistakes while 5 **ineffective** CEOs were described as not being trusted, being overly political, lacking integrity (Kaplan, 1988)

5. Response to Change

Above all, leaders have ensured that their organizations are marked out by their flexibility of structure and process and by their ability to respond rapidly to change. They are committed to change throughout the organization and leaders have created an entrepreneurial climate which makes change 'exhilarating, refreshing, - means excitement when it is considered normal, when people expect it routinely' (Kanter, 1983 p63). Peters (1988) has described the indicators of a 'corporate culture for innovation' can be summarised as follows:-

- Innovation occurs within a clear vision.
- The leader is committed to and involved in innovation.
- All staff are empowered to take on and implement change.
- There is organizational fluidity. The organizational structure is flatter and 'bureaucracy busting' (Waterman, 1987 p237).
- Segmentalism is discouraged. Innovative teams flourish.
- Individuals are encouraged to become champions of change, risk taking is encouraged, failure is not penalised. Staff are constantly supported.
- Change is viewed as continuous; pilot schemes are promoted and small change constantly implemented.
- Communication is open and free flowing

Secondary Schools in England and Wales - Bureaucratic or Entrepreneurial?

So that is what we find in the new organizations outside education. In seeking effectiveness major changes have occurred in leadership styles and organizational structures and processes, particularly in the way in which work is done and staff empowered in order to accommodate pleasing the customer and ensure a positive climate for change. What do we find in secondary schools in England and Wales? If schools are subject to major pressures in much the same way as commercial/service organizations, what changes have been made in schools to ensure effective performance? What we observed was a mixed picture.

It is a peculiar phenomenon that secondary schools, which are relatively small, professionally-driven organizations, are over-bureaucratic, with over-developed hierarchies. They have been bedevilled by a belief in hierarchical control and in the unassailable power of the leader. Why does bureaucracy, with its hierarchical top-down approaches, survive and flourish in institutions despite sustained criticism? Beare et al (1989) remark that, in spite of a heavy assault on its worth, the classic one-dimensional bureaucracy is alive and well, unfortunately. The truth is that in schools procedures and rules dominate and there is a concern for boundaries between functions.

Of course bureaucracy takes various forms and does not always follow Weber's ideal. There are different degrees of bureaucracy in each organization, with some parts of the organization being much more highly bureaucratised than others. In the case of schools, pockets of autonomy can be found where instructional aspects of schools reflect the traditional autonomy of teachers in the classroom. Recent research however both inside and outside education suggests that bureaucracy is totally inimicable to excellent organizations (Peters 1988, Kanter 1989). Bureaucracy is seen as smothering innovation, substituting rules for common sense, stultifying decision making and straight jacketing enterprise. It envisages its staff working to rules, afraid of trying new ideas, putting themselves before the organization and reluctant to work in teams. It slows down action.

Research into schools finds that school leaders are no different from any other managers in attempting to apply standard solutions to functions in the school in order to attempt to ensure predictability (Beare et al 1989). Interviews with school staff elicited for us a depressing catalogue of the effects of bureaucracy: top-down decisions are still the most common; no devolution of power to junior staff; school leaders stressing power of veto; all major initiatives led by senior staff; other staff asked for recommendations and consulted but rarely given power to act.

Although this was the general picture from the 50 schools that we have researched over the past three years, we want to bring evidence in this paper from six schools in which Principals have made far reaching changes in the structure of the school and the way the school runs. How have these schools changed?

The Abandonment of Heroic Leadership

In these schools the Principals refuse to be the heroic leaders. They let go of power and empower staff. In general, as stated previously we found school leaders reluctant to give up power. In fact leaders are expert at disempowering rather than empowering staff. Where power is granted to staff it is granted not as a basic right to professionals but as a privilege on specified terms and conditions and power is withdrawn if these conditions are broken. The micro-political techniques of disempowering staff are well known. Examples are setting up 'mock' processes of consultation; ignoring the claims of less powerful groups within the organization; fostering a belief in the power of the leader; stressing staff loyalty and making staff feel unable to challenge the leadership; setting up restricted channels for communication and depriving staff of information. For example a middle manager in one of the schools visited claimed that:

> "The Principal has recently introduced a new management structure with the aim of involving more staff in decision making. Despite the time-consuming consultation about the elaborate changes in staff responsibilities - it has largely been a sham - the Principal continues to

> make all the key decisions. The whole process and its outcomes have made the staff even more frustrated than they were before."

The message here is very clear. Unless Principals are serious about empowering staff it would be better not to introduce structures that might make this possible, for it leads to frustration and in the end alienation of junior members of staff.

However, one school leader we visited was convinced of the benefits of empowering staff. The only way, according to this school leader, to increase new focuses of creative energy and thinking is to get all members of staff participating and contributing to the organization's well-being. Thus he has deliberately led his school away from both the autocracy of the Principal, and the standard development of oligarchical Senior Management Team towards power-sharing and decision-making across the institution.

As proof of the success of this policy, the Principal cites the behaviour of the members of his staff holding key responsibilities when they attend a meeting internal to the school or represent the school at some external function. The Principal says that members of staff are invested with the same authority and freedom the Principal would enjoy on such occasions, and argues that there is nothing more frustrating or demoralising for members of staff to be powerless and unable to take decisions at these meetings without first consulting with the Principal. Indeed the Principal said that the very few signs of irritation that he might show would be with members of staff who returned from meetings having failed to take decisions because of reluctance to act without first consulting the Principal.

The Principal of this school believes that top-down models of management are archaic and that it is myopic, arrogant and foolhardy for senior managers in schools to believe that they have a monopoly of leadership skills. His experience in this school has shown that when the school leader relinquishes the reins, these qualities of leadership emerge from all levels and type of staff and pervade the organization. He adds that some school leaders fear that letting go of tight control creates a serious danger of the school falling apart with a resultant anarchy. His experience, once again, is to the contrary. When his colleagues took up the power he wanted to share with them, they still wished to refer to the Principal at moments of uncertainty about major decisions. In reality, he adds, power returns to the Principal inadvertently. In practice, remarkably, the decision process is reversed. The staff have the power and are consulting with the Principal. The Principal is coach and counsellor. He is the empowerer. Peters has written:

> "success in today's environment will come when those on the front line are honoured as heroes and empowered to act" (1988 p442).

The school leader in this school has ensured that the front line people are the heroic figures to whom power is given. In another example we found that a post-heroic approach is possible, that ownership can be yielded to staff, and a Principal can refuse to be a hero. The context is an 11-18 school in an inner city area with modest housing and high unemployment.

When the present Principal took over his school a year previously he found a demoralised staff with senior staff such as the Deputies most demoralised because their roles had been totally underdeveloped. There was considerable tension between the Senior Management Team and the rest of the staff. The previous Principal had been an autocrat who had taken most major decisions himself. The new Principal immediately gave to the Senior Management Team, which he enlarged beyond the three

. Deputies, a positive brief. This was to work out with staff how they wanted to manage the school and particularly those areas for which they had responsibility. They not only had to come up with solutions on paper but also put them into practice. The Principal reports that different approaches emerged. Some members of the Senior Management Team had set up some fairly traditional hierarchical systems, others had created devolved functional or task-related groups. The Principal encouraged this diversity for, whatever the approach, the Deputies and other senior staff at last had real management responsibilities involving not simply routine day-to-day tasks but developmental activities. Tensions between the Senior Management Team and the staff were disappearing and ownership of the work areas was emerging. The Principal gave power to the Senior Management Team but they soon realised that their only way forward was to get the staff fully on their side, and to win support by pushing responsibility lower down the system. That they were operating with different styles and different participative methods was of less importance, in the Principal's view, than the fact that, for the first time in the life of that particular school, staff took ownership. It would have been easy, the Principal argues, to have become a heroic figure in the circumstances of that school. Staff were desperate for change. They were looking for leadership. The Principal stepped into a vacuum ready made for him to become known as the saviour. Instead he deliberately put issues for change on the agenda. He refused to give answers. The staff had to find answers and at the same time find themselves. Some staff found this process even more painful than working under the former autocratic leader and a few staff have expressed disappointment in the lack of deciveness and definitive leadership of the Principal. In reality the majority of staff are emerging as a confident, lively group who believe that their school is now within their ownership and is an institution of which they are truly proud.

Empowerment and Teams: An Emerging Trend

It was found that many Principals were making incremental changes to their management structures such as broadening the composition of the Senior Management Team and creating working or whole school committees to which policy formulation is delegated. Others were seeking a structure to break down the 'corrosive' division between academic and pastoral structures. One Principal had a mixture of 'fixed' teams looking at policy on ongoing issues and 'short-lived' task forces created to tackle particular problems. Flexible internal structures are being created which are sufficiently 'strong' but 'adaptable' to cope with powerful external pressures. A number of the schools were reducing the number of senior staff, particularly at Deputy Principal level where three Deputy Principal posts had been reduced to two.

However the most radical changes in structure were seen in those schools which had introduced the concept of self-managing teams. This empowerment of staff through devolved team-working entails highly autonomous, highly developed groups of people who have almost total control over their work area. These teams have a substantial involvement in policy-making, planning and resource allocation for their designated areas. To ensure co-ordination, new co-ordinator roles were being introduced.

In one school out went ineffective Heads of Department meetings and in came staff self-managing teams of 7 or 8 staff empowered to make decisions on curriculum, finance, building, staff development and community links. All members of staff were on at least one team. Pastoral teams were empowered to deal directly with parents and outside agencies.

An example of self-managed teams was also found in an 11-18 Comprehensive School in a 'mixed' area with a wide range of ability amongst pupils. The school leader, who is an ardent student of Japan and its education and business, has called these approaches to management 'Geikokingo' - the jumping of the inferior over the superior (or perhaps the subordinate over the superordinate). This school has succeeded in both flattening the organization and in creating effective self managing teams.

These changes have seen the introduction to work areas of responsibilities which are independent of position within the hierarchy. Because of the restricted number of posts 'higher' up the hierarchy, the Principal proposed a series of posts which exercised key management functions and which existed side by side with the existing hierarchical system, but which also caused a reassessment of roles within the hierarchy. The functional management posts were an invitation to some members of staff to exercise responsibility over certain areas of the school work such as curricular work, inset coordination, social and life skills, testing and assessment, the extension of TVEI, Records of Achievement (ROAS) and self-supported learning. In these areas functional managers exercise a large measure of direct responsibility and are responsible for creating teams for achieving staff cooperation, and for guiding these to arrive at policy and execution in their named areas. The Principal has written:

> "Under functional management a degree of ambiguity is introduced. A person may simply be a team member in one function but be exercising a large measure of direct responsibility in another or be the holder of a high position in the hierarchy. The key to success is to see the tasks clearly and to guide our actions by what needs to be done, not by the extraneous and often irrelevant considerations of status."

Of course many schools have cross curricular roles and teams but they are usually seen within the framework of conventional hierarchy and indeed contained and restricted by it. In this school, the team leaders and teams are in the driving seat and feedback to the centre. The teams are empowered to make policy and act upon it.

A Concern with Customers and Quality

A concern with customers and customer perception of quality is inherent in the making of the entrepreneurial organization. All the Principals in the sample were making powerful attempts to please the customer - here interpreted as both parents and pupils. The schools were creating a distinctive corporate image and stressing its unique products and services as the schools fought competing schools to gain customers. Marketing policies had been created; market research was carried out into what parents were looking for in the schools; some of the schools had Press Officers to ensure as much publicity as possible for the school; the school administrative staff had been sent on training programmes in dealing with the customer and in telephone techniques. Powerful partnerships were being created between the schools and their customers. In one school not investigated by us a partnership proposal has been introduced at the centre of which is a 'simple but symbolic document' which incorporates a declaration of intent by the school and by the family to commit both parties to the education of their children. Joint responsibility and a sense of shared endeavour between supplier and customer is ensured (Bradbury, 1990). The more subtle concept of 'internal customers' was found in one school where staff were encouraged to see other members of staff as customers for whom they were performing a service.

All the Principals in the sample pursued a commitment to maintaining the highest quality with a particular focus on the quality of learning. The language of quality/customer satisfaction pervaded the interviews with senior staff and the expression of the school 'vision' usually incorporated the notion of quality with phrases such as 'committed to quality' the staff were starting to create a climate for quality, for example, insisting on all documents/literature that left the school was of the highest quality. One Faculty Head talked about his particular Principal and his obsession with quality as follows:

> "Statements about 'quality' litter his policy documents with an almost obsessive regularity. A preoccupation with quality remains the highest of his advocacies."

However, all the Principals in the sample were better at talking about quality than attempting to measure it. Although schools in the UK now have to publicly produce examination results as some indicator of performance, there was little attempt in the schools of systematic quality audits. The attempts at SBRs (School Based Reviews) were at an early stage. There was some evaluation of Departments set, in one school in particular, against overall school and departmental plans. This was carried out on an annual basis with departmental staff reviewing their own performance. On the other hand all the schools were committed to staff appraisal and were already involved in 'pilot appraisal projects'. However it was found that few staff had been fully trained in appraisal interviewing.

To ensure staff quality, much more care was being taken in staff selection and promotion than previously. Interview procedures were rigourous and painstaking although clear criteria for selection and promotion were rarely stated. Nor did schools employ 'assessment centre' techniques seeking out for example the ability to work in teams or to adapt to changing needs.

Maintaining the quality of the teaching staff through staff development was also carried out in a way which suggests a lack of planning. Staff development was more likely to occur to meet immediate needs or crisis demands and insufficient attention was given to practising needs and creating a clear framework in which staff development could operate.

This appears to suggest that a neo-Taylorist model is only being partially implemented. There is a concern with increased productivity and reduced costs through tight financial constraint and effective use of resources but relatively weak attempts are being made at performance measurement and individual appraisal. There are indications, however, that, in some schools the need to control costs is leading to tighter supervision of the workforce, a readiness to make teachers redundant to save costs and an erosion of the professional culture of participation and collaboration.

Strong Instructional Leadership

All six schools from which evidence is drawn for this paper had strong ~~institutional~~ instructional leadership. They were both chief executives and leading professionals and had a deep understanding of the philosophical and practical bases of learning (Hughes 1985). They ensured that the school had a coherent learning approach and that a central focus in the school was the delivery of improved teaching and learning. These school leaders took the lead in curriculum issues and were helping staff to understand the complex curriculum and assessment issues surrounding the introduction of the National Curriculum in England and Wales. One school leader said:

> "It is my job to help staff make sense of it all, to give leadership in terms of developing conceptual frameworks for the curriculum but mainly to serve the staff and to make sure I can be of help in their search for relevant criteria for the curriculum."

Leaders were Fair and Caring

In the larger sample of schools investigated, there were clear indicators of patterns of behaviour which do not suggest a caring attitude to staff nor the integrity and trust you would expect as the foundation of school leadership. However in the schools discussed in detail here, the Principals had created a caring culture moved by openness and integrity. These school leaders had abandoned the micro-political techniques of disempowering staff through political games. One school leader stated:

> "Let's be frank about this. Principals can easily manipulate and despite everything I've done in this school to dispense power, some staff still look on me as a figure of authority. It's sometimes tempting to use manipulative techniques - I am human, too, with all the human frailties. But there is a danger to the school if micro-politics and devious tactics take over. I expect staff never to tell me lies or try to 'con' me. I promise staff never to do the same to them. We've got to have openness and honesty. There is no other way."

Empowerment for Change

In the six schools where radical changes occurred the school leaders had created conditions which made it possible for staff to innovate and experiment. In one school major curriculum innovation and the introduction of a range of entrepreneurial activities, enterprise and risk taking had become normal features of the school. The Principal (Pyart, 1989) stated that staff commitment to change was gained through building relationships through trust and openness, through sharing perceptions and understanding, through joint responsibility and recognition of effort. Staff were encouraged to speak freely and different perceptions of teachers had to be managed 'creatively and deftly' in a climate of trust and mutual respect.

Some of the changes the school has been able to introduce through a shared and trusting approach to risk taking had been:

- A unique modular mode of curriculum delivery (with all the attendant risks of not getting validation by an examination body).
- Supported self-study provision.
- A far-reaching TVEI programme which is marked by electronic computerised technology; modular curricula; block timetabling and resource-based learning.
- A range of entrepreneurial activities which includes setting up in school private companies to sell its products, eg a competitive word processing/printing service was established. The school gained sponsored support from a number of local companies.
- The introduction of Japanese and Arabic into the curriculum.

- By creating an entrepreneurial climate, by removing inappropriate structures and by building trust and confidence, these Principals empowered staff to change.

Conclusions

It was clear from our research that many Principals were suffering to a high degree tensions about the need to change. There was a conflict between, for example, the leader as the dominant figure in the organization and the leader as facilitator and sharer of power. There was equally tension between bureaucratic and entrepreneurial activities. However, this paper has demonstrated that some school principals are evolving new approaches to the design and leadership of schools which challenge long standing leadership and organizational models.

This paper is not about the effectiveness of these changes in that it does not attempt to measure systematically the benefits of these changes or to compare them with less innovative situations. However, evidence from organizations outside schools would appear to indicate an increase in efficiency and productivity and an enhancement of staff motivation and morale through the new organizations' ability to respond to customer needs. It would therefore suggest that to ensure effectiveness, school principals will need to rethink schools as organizations and to create an entrepreneurial organization which can respond rapidly and effectively to new challenges.

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